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People Profile: Jeff Slagell, Serials Librarian

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People Profile — Jeff Slagell

Column Editor: **Allison P. Mays**
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Jeff Slagell
Serials/ILL Librarian
W.B. Roberts Library
Delta State University

Born: Manchester, IA, in 1968

Current Residence: Cleveland, MS, about two hours south of Memphis, TN

Education: B.A. in Psychology from the University of Iowa, 1991

M.A. in Information Resources and Library Science from the University of Arizona, 1999

M.A. in Communication from the University of Miami, A.B.T.

Summary of job experiences:

Pre-library: I have done a little bit of everything since I started working when I was twelve including: mowed city parks, walked beans, bailed hay, delivered pizzas, video store clerk, worked in a 3rd class mailing facility, unloaded semi trucks at a Wal-Mart Distribution Center, convenience store manager, and loaded trucks at a Land O' Lakes animal feed plant. Whew.

I worked in a variety of staff positions in Richter Library at the University of Miami before I earned my Library Science degree including: Circulation Library Assistant, Periodicals Supervisor, Stacks Supervisor, and Coordinator of Monographic Receiving.

1999 – present: Serials/ILL Librarian at Delta State University in Cleveland, MS

Family circumstances prompted my relocation to the Mississippi Delta. It is a truly interesting region full of history, culture, and, of course, the Blues. While I enjoy the resources of a large research institution, Delta State's size has allowed me to get my hands on almost everything and gain some excellent experience in the process.

Family: I have one son: Christopher, almost 3.

Biggest recent surprise:

Professionally: from my fellow library staff's perspective – that I can act as Webmaster and be certified to drive three different types of forklift trucks

Personally: that if you are from Iowa, you will always be a Yankee to some in the South, and it's not called the Civil War, but the War of Northern Aggression

Last book read and literary tastes: *Hannibal* by Thomas Harris (yikes). I read almost everything and I tend to go in spurts. I especially enjoy historical biographies, film history, and you can't beat John Grisham, Michael Crichton, and Tom Clancy for a little mental vacation.

What I do in my spare time: I am a serious film buff and I'll watch *anything*.

What I'd like to be doing seven years from now: Working in a dynamic position in an academic environment.

From the Reference Desk

Column Editor: **Tom Gilson** (Head, Reference Services,
College of Charleston) <gilson@cofc.edu>

Writing book reviews became trivial on September 11th. Everyday things faded into afterthoughts. Riveted by an event deemed impossible the day before, I was stunned and absorbed by what was unfolding on a television specially installed in the library. Nothing else seemed to matter. This was an earth-shattering event and my day-to-day concerns paled in comparison. But as time passed, I realized that the everyday cares like helping students with research, reading the paper, watching TV, talking with friends, kissing my wife goodbye in the morning, and yes, writing book reviews, were the things that, taken together, made up a rich and often useful whole.

I also realized that all these everyday things are a reflection of strength. They reflect vibrancy, vibrancy born of the diversity that pulses through daily life. Often, we think of diversity in racial and ethnic terms. But there is another diversity, the diversity of fascination. You and I have an inherent cu-

riosity with all kinds of ideas and issues that we are driven to indulge. And here, in this place, in this country, in this society, we are blessed with the freedom to pursue them. It is a freedom that we too often take for granted. So, aside from the needless deaths and the incredible destruction of September 11th, maybe there was an added reason why we were appalled and terrified by that day. We realized what we could lose. The freedom to pursue diverse interests, ideas and callings, no matter where they take us, is a gift not to be assumed, or taken lightly.

What does this have to do with the reviewing of books? Well, as I looked at a book truck full of titles I was considering for review, this diversity of interests, ideas and callings hit home. As I examined these books, the rich diversity of topics and interests represented on that truck was obvious. So with your permission I am going to "freely pursue" a broad variety of books, hoping they reinforce what I am talking about.

The *Oxford Companion to J.M.W. Turner*, (2001, 0198600259, \$95) is a good book about a great painter. Covering every aspect of Turner's life and artistic accomplishment in a fact laden but clearly written style, this Oxford University Press title is well worth considering. Beside the informative text there are 32 color plates as well as a chronology of Turner's life. The entries are signed and many have references to works cited in the general bibliography. Overall this is a careful scholarly treatment that students, scholars and admirers of Turner will welcome. It should find its way on to academic library shelves as well as into public library collections where there is interest.

Feature Films, 1960-1969 (2001, 0786411007, \$95) is another labor of love from researcher **Harris M. Lentz**. Published by **McFarland** this book is a thorough and comprehensive filmography of both English and foreign language films that were released in the US during the turbulent 1960s. (It does not include films made for television.) Each entry has nuts and bolts information like date, cast, director, genre, running time etc. as well as a one-sentence story line. The over 4300 titles are arranged alphabetically and there is a general index by entry number. The only downside is the lack of a genre/topic index. Nonetheless, libraries where there is serious interest in film and film history will want to consider it. Appropriate for either reference or circulation depending on need.

Published by **Routledge**, the *Encyclopedia of Asian Philosophy* (2001, 0415172810, \$160) is a one volume reference that concentrates on an area of study too long neglected. Edited by **Oliver Leaman** (who also contributed to the excellent **Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy**)

these concisely written articles are full of useful information. They vary in length according to the importance of the topic and most have individual bibliographies. The book is easy to use with subject, name and thematic indexes providing access to the al-

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